

Amendments to the Claims:

This Listing of Claims will replace all prior version, and listings, of claims in the Application.

1-40. (CANCELLED)

41. (Currently amended) An elongate batten adapted for positioning intermediate an inner wall framing member and an outer wall cladding sheet having an inner surface to facilitate dispersion and evaporation of moisture from a wall cavity, said batten including comprising:

an outer surface and an inner surface, the outer surface containing grooves having a defined depth below the outer surface of the batten to facilitate passage of water through the grooves, wherein a portion of the outer surface of the batten is in contact with the inner surface of the cladding sheet;

at least one longitudinally extending channel to facilitate migration and drainage of moisture between the batten and the framing member along the length of the batten.

42. (Currently amended) A batten according to claim 41, wherein the at least one longitudinal channel is formed in ~~an~~ the inner surface of the batten adapted for face-to face engagement with an adjacent outer surface of the underlying framing member.

43. Cancelled.

44. (Previously presented) A batten according to claim 41, wherein the at least one longitudinal channel extends through the batten.

45. (Previously presented) A batten according to claim 41, including a plurality of said longitudinal channels disposed in generally parallel side-by-side relationship and extending along substantially the entire length of the batten.

46. (Previously presented) A batten according to claim 45, wherein the longitudinal channels are respectively formed between adjacent pairs of a corresponding plurality of longitudinal ridges, said ridges collectively defining the inner surface of the batten.

47. (Previously presented) A batten according to claim 41, wherein the batten includes a generally transverse channel to facilitate migration and drainage of moisture across the batten.

48. (Previously presented) A batten according to claim 47, wherein said transverse channel is formed in the inner surface of the batten adapted for face-to-face engagement with the adjacent outer surface of the framing member.

49. Cancelled

50. (Previously presented) A batten according to claim 47, wherein the transverse channel extends through the batten.

51. (Previously presented) A batten according to claim 41, including a plurality of said longitudinal channels disposed in generally parallel side-by-side relationship and extending along substantially the entire length of the batten, the longitudinal channels being respectively formed between adjacent pairs of a corresponding plurality of longitudinal ridges, said ridges collectively defining the inner surface of the batten, and a plurality of said transverse channels to facilitate migration and drainage of moisture across the batten, said transverse channels being disposed in generally parallel side-by-side relationship.

52. (Previously presented) A batten according to claim 51, wherein the transverse channels are defined by a corresponding series of openings formed in the respective longitudinal ridges.

53. (Previously presented) A batten according to claim 52, wherein the openings defining the respective transverse channels are transversely aligned.

54. (Previously presented) A batten according to claim 52, wherein the openings defining the respective transverse channels are transversely staggered.

55. (Previously presented) A batten according to claim 51, wherein the transverse and longitudinal channels form a ventilation and drainage matrix adapted to permit migration of moisture in liquid or vapour form across, along and through the batten.

56. (Previously presented) A batten according to claim 55, wherein the longitudinal and transverse channels are disposed in generally orthogonal relationship.

57. (Previously presented) A batten according to claim 55, wherein at least some of the transverse and longitudinal channels respectively intersect.

58. (Previously presented) A batten according to claim 41, being formed from a plastics material adapted to resist moisture permeation, and adapted to be readily cut to desired lengths using conventional sawing tools.

59. (Previously presented) A batten according to claim 41, incorporating pre-formed lines of weakness disposed at predetermined intervals,' to permit the batten to be manually divided into small sections of desired length, without the need for cutting or sawing.

60. (Previously presented) A batten according to claim 41, being formed substantially from PVC.

61. (Previously presented) A batten according to claim 41, being formed substantially from FRC.

62. (Previously presented) A batten according to claim 41, being between 30 and around 60mm in width.

63. (Previously presented) A batten according to claim 41, being approximately 45mm in width.

64. (Previously presented) A batten according to claim 41, being between 10mm and around 30mm in thickness.

65. (Previously presented) A batten according to claim 41, being approximately 19 mm in thickness.

66. (Previously presented) A batten according to claim 51, including three longitudinal channels, each being approximately 9.5 mm in width and approximately 17 mm in height, defined by respective intermediate ridges being approximately 2.5 mm in thickness.

67. (Previously presented) A batten according to claim 66, wherein the transverse channels are defined by a series of cutouts in the ridges, each cutout being generally V-shaped with a length of around 20mm and a height of around 8mm, the cutouts being spaced apart along the respective ridges with approximately 50mm between centers.

68. (Previously presented) A batten according to claim 67, wherein corresponding cutouts on adjacent ridges are staggered.

69. (Previously presented) A batten according to claim 41, having any preformed length of around 2400mm, and being adapted for division into smaller predetermined lengths on-site.

70. (Currently amended) A batten according to claim 41, wherein the ~~outer surface is grooved, to grooves~~ facilitate the downward passage ~~past the batten~~ of water ~~passing~~ along the inner surface of the outer cladding material.

71. (Currently amended) A method of building construction, said method comprising the steps of:

forming a structural frame from framing members, such that the framing members define cavities therebetween;

securing a plurality of battens to outer surfaces of at least some of the framing members, wherein each of said plurality of battens include an outer surface and an inner surface, the outer surface containing grooves having a defined depth below the outer surface of the batten to facilitate passage of water through the grooves and at least one longitudinally extending channel to facilitate migration and drainage of moisture between the batten and the framing member along the length of the batten,

applying an outer cladding material having an inner surface to substantially cover the framing members and the battens; such that the battens collectively form a clearance space between the framing members and the cladding material, wherein a portion of the outer surface of each batten is in contact with the inner surface of the cladding material;

the battens thereby facilitating drainage and ventilation of the cavities.

72. (Previously presented) A method according to claim 71, wherein the structural frame is formed substantially from a material selected from the group comprising timber, metal, FRC and plastics, and wherein the method is employed to construct a wall section of a building.

73. (Previously presented) A method according to claim 71, wherein the cladding material is FRC sheet.

74. (Previously presented) A method according to claim 71, wherein the battens are secured so as collectively to cover more than approximately 50% of the combined outer surface area of the framing members to which the method is applied.

75. (Previously presented) A method according to claim 71, wherein the battens are secured to the framing members by a fastening technique selected from the group comprising nailing, screwing, tacking, stapling, gluing, welding, chemical bonding, frictional engagement, and mechanical engagement.

76. (Previously presented) A method according to claim 71, including the further step of applying an internal lining material such that the framing members are effectively sandwiched, directly or indirectly, between the external cladding material and the internal lining material.

77. (Previously presented) A method according to claim 76, wherein the internal lining material is plasterboard.

78. (Previously presented) A method according to claim 71, including the step of preattaching the battens to the cladding sheets to form a batten and cladding subassembly, and subsequently securing the sub-assembly to the frame.

79. (Previously presented) A method according to claim 71, including the step of forming the at least one longitudinal channel or a generally transverse channel in the batten by a process selected from the group comprising: extruding; machining; milling; routing; casting; moulding; and fabricating; or a combination of those processes.

80. (Currently amended) A building or building section constructed by the method comprising:

forming a structural frame from framing members, such that the framing members define cavities therebetween;

securing a plurality of battens to outer surfaces of at least some of the framing members, wherein each of said plurality of battens include an outer surface and an inner surface, the outer surface containing grooves having a defined depth below the outer surface of the batten to facilitate passage of water through the grooves and at least one longitudinally extending channel to facilitate migration and drainage of moisture between the batten and the framing member along the length of the batten,

applying an outer cladding material having an inner surface to substantially cover the framing members and the battens; such that the battens collectively form a clearance space between the framing members and the cladding material, wherein a portion of the outer surface of each batten is in contact with the inner surface of the cladding material.

81. (New) An elongate batten adapted for positioning intermediate an inner wall framing member and an outer wall cladding sheet having an inner surface to facilitate dispersion and evaporation of moisture from a wall cavity, said batten comprising:

an outer surface and an inner surface, the inner surface containing grooves having a defined depth below the outer surface of the batten to facilitate passage of water through the grooves, wherein a portion of the inner surface of the batten is in contact with the framing member;

at least one longitudinally extending channel to facilitate migration and drainage of moisture between the batten and the framing member along the length of the batten.

82. (New) A batten according to claim 81, wherein the at least one longitudinal channel is formed in the outer surface of the batten adapted for face-to-face engagement with an adjacent inner surface of the overlying cladding sheet.

83. (New) A batten according to claim 81, wherein the batten includes a generally transverse channel to facilitate migration and drainage of moisture across the batten.

84. (New) A batten according to claim 83, wherein the transverse channel is formed in the outer surface of the batten adapted for face-to-face engagement with an adjacent inner surface of the overlying cladding sheet.